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A Mission of Care

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Deploying can be a stressful time, but it’s especially hard for Sailors who deploy individually.

A Mobile Care Team (MCT) sees Individual Augmentees, Sailors who are pulled together as a unit into a Navy command, Sailors trained to deploy while embedded with the Army, joint or international leadership and at times, Sailors who are deployed to one command but geographically dislocated with no local leadership available.

MCTs were established by the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery to present a blend of psychological assessment and prevention services to support IAs. Team members conduct behavior health surveys and focus groups from multiple Navy units while on their mission.

Some of their collected data are analyzed on site to provide command leadership with a quick psychological look at a unit, with a more in-depth analysis available shortly thereafter. Team members also meet individually and in small groups with Navy personnel to provide education in combat and operational stress control.


I was assigned to MCT-7, a first-time reduced personnel team that conducted unparalleled surveillance extending beyond the extraordinary work of previous teams. The team conducted extensive battlefield circulation missions via rotary and fixed-wing flights, convoy movements throughout some of the heaviest and taxing conditions and, on foot, all accessible areas throughout Afghanistan.


We frequently traveled in harm’s way “outside the wire” in some of the most unstable areas to


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- December 2014 (17)
- November 2014 (11)

give Navy warfighters an otherwise unattainable voice. Consultations were formulated with proposed tangible recommendations for unit leaders into various challenges Sailors faced on a daily basis. The consultations were forwarded and ultimately resulted in direct changes to Navy policy, guidance, logistics and training for IAs.

MCT-7 has had a unique opportunity to reach out to fellow shipmates. The team has seen firsthand what Navy service members experience, while at the same time assessing mental well-being and gathering information on Sailor concerns. It is a real pleasure to see how well our Navy brethren have integrated into the joint community, demonstrated technical expertise and provided leadership at a level that is unique to the Sailor development model.

Professionally, this tour provided great insight into the psychological stressors of the deployed Sailor. This information is invaluable as it helps to understand their reintegration and possible deployment-related stressors.

Personally, this was a rewarding experience as I had the opportunity to provide a voice for the Sailors to their leaders and to big Navy.

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October 2014 (15)
September 2014 (20)
August 2014 (14)
July 2014 (13)
June 2014 (8)
May 2014 (11)
April 2014 (9)
March 2014 (14)
February 2014 (7)
January 2014 (7)
December 2013 (7)
November 2013 (12)
October 2013 (7)
September 2013 (14)
August 2013 (13)
July 2013 (11)
June 2013 (22)
May 2013 (15)
April 2013 (14)
March 2013 (14)
February 2013 (14)
January 2013 (12)
December 2012 (11)
November 2012 (11)
October 2012 (7)
September 2012 (9)
August 2012 (12)
July 2012 (13)
June 2012 (17)
May 2012 (22)
April 2012 (14)
March 2012 (13)
February 2012 (14)
January 2012 (13)
December 2011 (13)
November 2011 (20)
October 2011 (22)
September 2011 (12)
August 2011 (16)